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## **Transnational Lordship and the Plantagenet Empire: The Mortimer Lords of Wigmore, 1247-1425<sup>1</sup>**

The Norman victory at Hastings in October 1066 led not only to the immediate establishment of aristocratic estates that spanned the English Channel, but also to the development of lordships that crossed political boundaries within the British Isles. By 1200 many substantial landowners in England – some of whom also continued to hold Norman estates – were also lords of lands in Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. The first half of the thirteenth century saw the severing of tenurial ties between England and Normandy and Poitou, but also the establishment by King Henry III of new cross-Channel estates (some of which extended to include lands in Ireland) designed to elevate the status of his French relatives.<sup>2</sup> The final conquest of Wales in 1282 led to the acquisition by several English magnates of substantial estates in north Wales, and after initial victories against the Scots in the late 1290s it appeared that a new tranche of Anglo-Scottish lordships would also be established.<sup>3</sup> Scottish resistance after 1305, however, not only dashed such hopes, but also led to the breaking of landholding

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<sup>1</sup> Delivered as the O'Donnell Lecture in May 2015 at Bangor University, Cardiff University, and the University of Wales, Trinity Saint David, Lampeter.

<sup>2</sup> David Bates, *The Normans and Empire* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 106-15; John Le Patourel, *The Norman Empire* (Oxford, 1976), pp. 279-318. For transnationalism see John Watts, 'Conclusions', in Hannah Skoda, Patrick Lantschner and R. L. J. Shaw (eds.), *Contact and Exchange in Later Medieval Europe: Essays in Honour of Malcolm Vale* (Cambridge, 2013), pp. 267-75.

<sup>3</sup> David A. Carpenter, *The Struggle for Mastery: Britain 1066-1284* (London, 2003), pp. 338-91; R. R. Davies, 'Colonial Wales', *Past and Present*, 65 (1974), 3-23.

links across England's northern border that in many cases had been established early in the twelfth century.<sup>4</sup>

Transnational lordship declined as a feature of English political society in the fourteenth century, while remaining of great importance to those magnates whose estates were not confined within the borders of England.<sup>5</sup> First among these were the Mortimer lords of Wigmore in Herefordshire. From the late thirteenth century they were the greatest of the marcher lords – a reality symbolized in Roger Mortimer's choice for himself of the novel title 'earl of March' upon being elevated to the peerage in 1328.<sup>6</sup> It was fitting that the premier transnational lord should also be the greatest of the marcher barons since it was the men endowed by the Conqueror on the borders of Wales who by their aggression against their Welsh neighbours had established the first transnational lordships in Britain. Furthermore, a century later lords of the Welsh March were among the main promoters and beneficiaries of the English conquest of Ireland.<sup>7</sup> While the Mortimers were intensely proud of their March

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<sup>4</sup> Michael Prestwich, 'Colonial Scotland: the English in Scotland under Edward I', in R. Mason (ed.), *Scotland and England, 1286-1815* (Edinburgh, 1987), pp. 6-17; Fiona Watson, *Under the Hammer: Edward I and Scotland 1286-1307* (East Linton, 1998), pp. 197-222; G. W. S. Barrow, *The Anglo-Norman Era in Scottish History* (Oxford, 1980).

<sup>5</sup> Robin Frame, *The Political Development of the British Isles, 1100-1400* (Oxford, 1990), esp. chs. 3 and 7; R. R. Davies, *The First English Empire: Power and Identities in the British Isles 1093-1343* (Oxford, 2000), esp. ch. 6;

<sup>6</sup> Seymour Phillips, *Edward II* (New Haven and London, 2010); Roy M. Haines, *King Edward II: Edward of Caernarfon, His Life, His Reign, and its Aftermath, 1284-1330* (Montreal & Kingston, London, Ithaca); Ian Mortimer, *The Greatest Traitor: The Life of Sir Roger Mortimer 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of March, Ruler of England 1327-1330* (London, 2003).

<sup>7</sup> Robin Frame, 'Conquest and settlement', in Barbara Harvey (ed.), *The Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 31-66.

heritage their ambitions were not confined to the borders of Wales. Roger Mortimer ruled England between 1327 and 1330, and in the early 1400s the last Mortimer earl of March, Edmund, was declared to be the rightful king of England by opponents of Henry IV.<sup>8</sup> Two of Edmund's grand-nephews, Edward and Richard, wore the English crown for most of the period between 1460 and 1485.<sup>9</sup> Marcher lordship alone could not have propelled the family to such heights: what made the Mortimers great was their possession of lands in England, Wales and Ireland. Without the support of the crown such lands would not have come their way, and in identifying royal favour as crucial to the rise of the Mortimers this paper argues that the interest of the crown in promoting transnational lordship after 1300 has been underestimated. This in turn, it is suggested, has impaired our understanding of the nature of the Plantagenet empire.<sup>10</sup>

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The Domesday survey reveals that in 1086 the Mortimers were in the second rank of lay landowners in England. They held manors in twelve counties spread across the country, but had already established Wigmore as the centre of their lordship. In 1247 they acquired significant new estates with the marriage of Roger (d. 1282) to Maud de Briouze, who had

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<sup>8</sup> R. R. Davies, *Lords and Lordship in the British Isles in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. B. Smith (Oxford, 2009), pp. 82-3, 141-3; Chris Given-Wilson, *Henry IV* (New Haven and London, 2016), pp. 144-7, 209, 216-32; R. R. Davies, *The Revolt of Owain Glyn Dŵr* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 176-80.

<sup>9</sup> P. A. Johnson, *Duke Richard of York, 1411-1460* (Oxford, 1988); Christine Carpenter, *The Wars of the Roses: Politics and the Constitution, c.1437-1509* (Cambridge, 1997).

<sup>10</sup> Peter Crooks, David Green and W. Mark Ormrod, 'The Plantagenets and empire in the later Middle Ages', in Peter Crooks, David Green and W. Mark Ormrod (eds.), *The Plantagenet Empire, 1259-1453* (Donington, 2016), pp. 1-34; John Watts, 'The Plantagenet empire and the continent: retrospect and prospect', in Crooks *et al* (eds.), *Plantagenet Empire*, pp. 403-20.

inherited parts of both the Briouze and Marshal lordships. The union elevated the Mortimers to a leading position among the magnates, bringing to them new lands in England, Wales, the March, and for the first time estates also in Ireland. The alliance had the support of Henry III, who allowed Roger to take possession of his estate despite being underage.<sup>11</sup>

While the marriage of Roger's son, Edmund (d. 1304) in 1285 to Margaret de Fiennes brought no similar increase in lands, it did have prestige value in that the bride was a kinswoman of Queen Eleanor.<sup>12</sup> In 1301 Edmund exploited the rising status of his family to secure for his eldest son, Roger (d. 1330), betrothal to Joan de Geneville. As in 1247, the crown allowed the Mortimer lord to enter his inheritance while still a minor. The marriage to Joan, like that of the elder Roger Mortimer in 1247, brought to the Mortimers estates in Wales, England, the March, and Ireland. What differed was the scale of the acquisition. The Geneville lands consisted of half of the lordship of Ludlow, the marcher lordship of Ewyas Lacy and half of the lordship of Meath in Ireland. The Mortimers of Wigmore were now not only the premier noble family of the March, they were also among the crown's greatest landed subjects.<sup>13</sup>

The execution of Roger Mortimer, first earl of March, for treason in 1330 should have ended the story of the Mortimers as great lords. Edward III, however, saw the removal of the man responsible for his father's death as an opportunity to conclude rather than continue the

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<sup>11</sup> C. P. Lewis, 'Mortimer, Ralph (I) de (fl. 1080-1104)', *ODNB*; J. J. Crump, 'Mortimer, Roger (III) (1231-82)', *ODNB*; R. R. Davies, 'Kings, lords and liberties in the March of Wales, 1066-1272', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5<sup>th</sup> ser., 29 (1979), 41-61; A. C. Reeves, *The Marcher Lords* (Llandybïe, 1983).

<sup>12</sup> Mortimer, *Greatest Traitor*, p. 11.

<sup>13</sup> For a list of the Mortimer and Geneville lands see George A. Holmes, *The Estates of the Higher Nobility in Fourteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1957), pp. 10-12.

conflicts with sections of the nobility that had characterised the reign of Edward II.<sup>14</sup> He refrained from completely destroying the Mortimers and eventually in 1354 annulled the sentence of treason passed on Roger Mortimer and restored the Mortimer estates and the title earl of March to Roger Mortimer (d. 1360), the grandson of the first earl of March.<sup>15</sup> The ‘Mortimer empire’ – as Rees Davies called it – that Roger Mortimer (d. 1360) was restored to in 1354 consisted not only of the lands his grandfather had possessed at the time of his fall, but also additional grants made to him more recently by an indulgent king.<sup>16</sup>

Before his death six years later Roger was to see his family benefit from royal favour to an even greater degree. In 1358 King Edward III sanctioned the betrothal of his only grandchild at the time, Philippa, daughter of his second son, Lionel of Antwerp, to Roger Mortimer’s son, Edmund.<sup>17</sup> When her marriage to Edmund took place in 1368 Philippa brought to her husband the stake of her mother, Elizabeth de Burgh, in both the Burgh and Clare lordships. In the March this added the lordships of Usk, Trelech and Caerleon to the Mortimer estate, and in England the great honour of Clare in East Anglia, and other lands in southern England. In Ireland it brought Clare manors in Kilkenny in the south, and the Burgh earldom of Ulster and lordship of Connacht in the north and west. Royal oversight of the

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<sup>14</sup> John Gillingham, ‘Killing and mutilating political enemies in the British Isles from the late twelfth century to the early fourteenth century: a comparative study’, in Brendan Smith (ed.), *Britain and Ireland, 900-1300: Insular Responses to Medieval European Change* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 114-34.

<sup>15</sup> W. Mark Ormrod, *Edward III* (New Haven and London, 2011), pp. 363-7.

<sup>16</sup> R. R. Davies, *Lordship and Society in the March of Wales 1282-1400* (Oxford, 1978), p. 54.

<sup>17</sup> W. Mark Ormrod, ‘Edward III and his family’, *Journal of British Studies* [hereafter *JBS*], 26 (1987), 398-422, at 409.

marriage market had led the Mortimers of Wigmore to the top of the English aristocratic world.<sup>18</sup>

Edward III's generosity was prompted in part by the military ability Mortimer had displayed against the French over the course of the previous decade. Traditionally, such prowess had been deployed by the lords of Wigmore against their Welsh neighbours, and they were involved in suppressing the several Welsh uprisings that followed the conquest of Wales in 1282.<sup>19</sup> They also fought in Scotland under Edward I and Edward II, and when the Anglo-Scottish conflict spilled over into Ireland it was Roger Mortimer (d. 1330) who was selected by the king to lead the fight against the Scots and their supporters on the island in 1317-18.<sup>20</sup> Military service on behalf of the crown was not confined to the British Isles. In 1254 Roger (d. 1282) served in Gascony with Henry III, and although his son and successor, Edmund, was among the marcher lords who in 1297 refused Edward I's summons to join his campaign in Flanders, Roger Mortimer returned to the earlier family tradition by serving in Gascony 1313.<sup>21</sup> All Mortimer earls of March following the restoration of their fortunes in

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<sup>18</sup> Davies, *Lordship and Society*, p. 55; Davies, *Lords and Lordship*, pp. 45-7; Chris Given-Wilson, *The English Nobility in the Late Middle Ages* (London, 1987), pp. 40-2.

<sup>19</sup> Brock Holden, *Lords of the Central Marches: English Aristocracy and Frontier Society, 1087-1265* (Oxford, 2008), esp. pp. 48-62; Max Lieberman, *The Medieval March of Wales: the Creation and Perception of a Frontier, 1066-1283* (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 81-101.

<sup>20</sup> David Walker, *Medieval Wales* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 154-7; Mortimer, *Greatest Traitor*, pp. 7-28; Robin Frame, *Ireland and Britain 1170-1450* (London, 1998), pp. 71-112.

<sup>21</sup> Crump, 'Mortimer, Roger (III) (1231-82)'; Michael Prestwich, *Edward I* (London, 1988), pp. 416-20; *Documents Illustrating the Crisis of 1297-98 in England*, ed. Michael Prestwich. Camden 4<sup>th</sup> ser. 24 (London, 1980), pp. 3-15; R. R. Davies, 'Mortimer, Roger (V), first earl of March (1287-1330)', *ODNB*.

1354 fought in France with the exception of Roger (d. 1398), whose death at the age of twenty-four ended what promised to be a busy military career.<sup>22</sup>

In return for its patronage, the crown demanded from the Mortimers of Wigmore service of various kinds. Roger Mortimer (d. 1330) was appointed lieutenant of Ireland in 1317, and with the exception of Roger, second earl of March (d. 1360), this was an office filled thereafter at some point in their careers by all the Mortimer earls until the line ended in 1425. Edmund, third earl of March, (d. 1381) held the office of marshal of England, while the fifth earl, also Edmund, (d. 1425) served as lieutenant of Normandy. This Edmund was also appointed as a councillor to assist in the running of the country on the accession to the throne of the nine-month old Henry VI in November 1422. Mortimer membership of the king's council had begun under Roger (d. 1282), as had attendance at parliament in response to royal summons. The power of the family in Wales was not usually supported by an official position there, although the first earl of March did secure for himself in 1328 a life grant of the justiciarship of the principality of Wales.<sup>23</sup>

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The circumstances in which the Mortimers of Wigmore acquired their first Irish lands were unremarkable, and carried with them no suggestion of the crucial role Ireland was later to play in the fortunes of the family. The final partition of the Marshal inheritance, made at Woodstock in May 1247, assigned to Maud de Briouze and her new husband, Roger Mortimer (d. 1282) estates in Ireland centred for the most part on the castle of Dunamase, in

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<sup>22</sup> Davies, *Lords and Lordship*, pp. 118, 129-30; R. R. Davies, 'Mortimer, Roger (VII), fourth earl of March and sixth earl of Ulster (1374-1398), *ODNB*; R. A. Griffiths, 'Mortimer, Edmund (V), fifth earl of March and seventh earl of Ulster (1391-1425), *ODNB*.

<sup>23</sup> See the biographies of the individuals concerned in *ODNB*.



the modern county Laois, which was valued at just over £343 per annum. This represented a significant addition to Mortimer resources, and Roger was unusual among the several English lords who had inherited Marshal lands in never subsequently visiting his new Irish estates.<sup>24</sup> In December 1264 he and the other leading marchers who had unsuccessfully opposed Simon de Montfort were forced to swear to remove themselves to Ireland for a year and a day, but they had not done so by the time of de Montfort's defeat and death in August of the following year.<sup>25</sup>

The Marshal lordship was not unique among those that came into the hands of the crown in the 1240s in including significant estates in both the Welsh March and Ireland. On his death in 1241 Walter de Lacy left to the two granddaughters who were his coheirs the lordship of Weobley in Herefordshire, the March lordship of Ewyas Lacy, and the Irish lordship of Meath. The marriages of these ladies introduced two new lords to the ranks of the marchers: John de Verdun, who was already a substantial landowner in Staffordshire and elsewhere in the English midlands, and Geoffrey de Geneville, a minor French lord with strong ties to the Savoyard party that surrounded King Henry III.<sup>26</sup> The de Verdons had held

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<sup>24</sup> G. H. Orpen, *Ireland under the Normans* with an introduction by Seán Duffy (Dublin, 2005), pp. 331-2.; Robin Frame, *Colonial Ireland, 1169-1369* (2nd edn, Dublin, 2012), pp. 74-80.

<sup>25</sup> Frame, *Ireland and Britain*, pp. 31-57, 59-69; J. R. Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 307-8. According to one contemporary source Roger slew de Montfort at Evesham and sent his head to Matilda at Wigmore: David A. Carpenter, 'A noble in politics: Roger Mortimer in the period of baronial reform and rebellion, 1258-1265', in Anne J. Duggan (ed.), *Nobles and Nobility in Medieval Europe: Concepts, Origins, Transformations* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 183-204; Carpenter, *Struggle for Mastery*, pp. 377-80, 417.

<sup>26</sup> Colin Veach, *Lordship in Four Realms: The Lacy Family, 1166-1241* (Manchester, 2014); Mark S. Hagger, *The Fortunes of a Norman Family: The De Verduns in England, Ireland and Wales, 1066-1316* (Dublin, 2001); Beth

land in Ireland since the 1180s, while de Geneville had no prior connection with the island. Unlike Roger Mortimer, both men spent considerable amounts of time in Ireland, and de Geneville was employed there as chief governor on two occasions. The marriage in 1301 of Joan de Geneville (d. 1354) to Roger Mortimer (d. 1330) served, therefore, both to consolidate ownership of marcher lordships in fewer hands, and to further strengthen landowning ties between English Ireland and the Welsh March and adjacent English counties.<sup>27</sup>

Tenurial bonds between England and Ireland had weakened somewhat in the period between the Mortimer marriages of 1247 and 1301. Beth Hartland has argued that Irish estates were disposed of by English lords in the late thirteenth century for a variety of reasons, including intimidation by resident lords, ill-health, increased participation in political affairs in England and, in the case of sub-tenants, a tendency to take their lead from their original benefactors and sell up and return to England when they did.<sup>28</sup> The response of the

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Hartland, 'Vaucouleurs, Ludlow and Trim: Ireland in the career of Geoffrey de Geneville (c.1226-1314)', *Irish Historical Studies* [hereafter *IHS*], 32, 128 (2001), 457-77.

<sup>27</sup> Brendan Smith, *Colonisation and Conquest in Medieval Ireland: The English in Louth, 1170-1330* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 93-5; Michael Potterton, *Medieval Trim: History and Archaeology* (Dublin, 2005), pp. 79-89; Scott L. Waugh, *The Lordship of England: Royal Wardships and Marriages in English Society and Politics 1217-1327* (Princeton, 1988), pp. 39-41.

<sup>28</sup> Beth Hartland, 'Reasons for leaving: the effect of conflict on English landholding in late thirteenth-century Leinster', *Journal of Medieval History*, 32 (2006), 18-26; Cormac Ó Cléirigh, 'The absentee landlady and the sturdy robbers', in Christine Meek and Katharine Simms (eds.), *"The Fragility of Her Sex"? Medieval Irishwomen in Their European Context* (Dublin, 1996); pp. 101-18; Brendan Smith, 'Geraldine lordship in thirteenth-century Ireland', in Peter Crooks and Seán Duffy (eds.), *The Geraldines and Medieval Ireland: The Making of a Myth* (Dublin, 2016), pp. 157-69.

crown to such developments, however, ensured that the reduction in transmarine landholding was partial and gradual. Thus when Robert de Muscegros – whose grandfather had been endowed in Ireland by Henry III as recently as 1250 – surrendered his lordship of Tradery in Thomond to the crown in 1275, King Edward I granted it to the younger brother of Gilbert, earl of Gloucester and lord of Kilkenny, Thomas de Clare, who had already displayed interest in Irish affairs.<sup>29</sup>

But the crown could not arrest the deterioration in the security situation in Ireland that prompted some English lords to sell their lands there. It was in the aftermath of a devastating attack on his Munster estates by Brian Ruad O'Brien [Ó Briain], king of Thomond, that Robert de Muscegros cut his ties with Ireland, and while Thomas de Clare partially succeeded in restoring the fortunes of the area around Bunratty castle before his death in 1287, he did so only by dint of regular and expensive warfare, and by exploiting divisions within the O'Brien dynasty.<sup>30</sup> The Mortimer lordship of Laois suffered attacks from the resurgent Irish family of O'More [Ó Mordha] family from the 1270s and was also weakened

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<sup>29</sup> Frame, *Ireland and Britain*, pp. 49-50; Robin Frame, 'Historians, aristocrats and Plantagenet Ireland, 1200-1360', in Chris Given-Wilson, Ann J. Kettle and Len Scales (eds.), *War, Government and Aristocracy in the British Isles c.1150-1500: Essays in Honour of Michael Prestwich* (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 131-47. 'In the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries newcomers could still be accepted without difficulty into the Irish aristocratic world'. (p. 143). See also Beth Hartland, 'Absenteeism: the chronology of a concept', in Björn Weiler, Janet Burton, Phillip Schofield, and K. Stöber (eds.), *Thirteenth Century England XI* (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 215-29.

<sup>30</sup> A. J. Otway-Ruthven, *A History of Medieval Ireland* (London, 1968), pp. 201-3; Michael Altschul, *A Baronial Family in Medieval England: The Clares, 1217-1314* (Baltimore, 1965), pp. 187-95.

by the violent feuding that occurred in the 1260s and 1290s between rival colonial lords.<sup>31</sup>

The reference in the extent of 1283 that followed Roger Mortimer's death to '200 acres extended at 100s. a year in times of peace, which are now worth nothing as they are waste due to the war of the Irish' bears witness to the economic consequences of such conflict.<sup>32</sup>

Security concerns may explain in part why Geoffrey de Geneville waited until December 1307 – by which time Roger was twenty – before transferring his lands to him and his wife and retiring to live among the Dominicans at Trim. They may also explain why, unlike his grandfather after 1247, Roger wasted no time in crossing the Irish Sea to exercise his lordship in his new possessions. In October 1308 he became the first lord of Wigmore to set foot in Ireland; he was to make the same journey a further five times in the following twelve years.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Cormac Ó Cléirigh, 'The impact of the Anglo-Normans in Laois', in P. G. Lane and William Nolan (eds.), *Laois: History and Society* (Dublin, 1999), pp. 161-82; Cormac Ó Cléirigh, 'The problems of defence: a regional case-study', in James F. Lydon (ed.), *Law and Disorder in Thirteenth-Century Ireland: The Dublin Parliament of 1297* (Dublin, 1997), pp. 25-56; Emmett O'Byrne, *War, Politics and the Irish of Leinster, 1156-1606* (Dublin, 2003), pp. 58-86.

<sup>32</sup> *Calendar of Close Rolls* [hereafter *CCR*] 1272-9, p. 435; *Inquisitions and Extents of Medieval Ireland*, ed. Paul Dryburgh and Brendan Smith. List and index Society vol. 320 (Kew, 2007), p. 30; James F. Lydon, 'The years of crisis', and 'A land of war', in Art Cosgrove (ed.), *A New History of Ireland II: Medieval Ireland 1169-1534* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 179-204; 240-74; Seán Duffy, 'Irish and Welsh responses to the Plantagenet empire in the reign of Edward I', in Crooks *et al* (eds.), *Plantagenet Empire*, pp. 150-168.

<sup>33</sup> J. R. S. Phillips, 'The Anglo-Norman nobility', in James Lydon (ed.), *The English in Medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 1984), pp. 87-104; Paul Dryburgh, 'Roger Mortimer and the Governance of Ireland, 1317-20', in Brendan Smith (ed.), *Ireland and the English World in the Late Middle Ages: Essays in Honour of Robin Frame* (Houndmills, 2009), pp. 89-102.

As early as 1327, Robin Frame has noted, ‘only the Mortimers remained as a major English family with a lively interest in Ireland’.<sup>34</sup> This was the result of either the disposal of their Irish interests by English lords, or the partition of inheritance upon the deaths of transmarine landowners without male heirs.<sup>35</sup> The Bigod earls of Norfolk, de Clare earls of Gloucester, and de Valence earls of Pembroke – all, like the Mortimers, beneficiaries of the partition of the Marshal inheritance – relinquished their stakes in Ireland in the first quarter of the fourteenth century, while Theobald de Verdon, lord of half of the Geneville inheritance, died without male heir in 1316.<sup>36</sup> As had been the case a generation earlier, the crown took the opportunity presented by these developments to bestow Irish lands on English lords, and some of the new transmarine estates thus engendered proved long-lasting.<sup>37</sup> Edward III reserved the greatest prize resulting from the death of a colonial lord in Ireland in this period

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<sup>34</sup> Robin Frame, *English Lordship in Ireland, 1318-1361* (Oxford, 1982), p. 53.

<sup>35</sup> Beth Hartland, ‘English lords in late thirteenth century and early fourteenth century Ireland: Roger Bigod and the de Clare lords of Thomond’, *English Historical Review*, 122 (2007), 318-48; Margaret Murphy, ‘The profits of lordship: Roger Bigod, earl of Norfolk and the lordship of Carlow, 1270-1306’, in L. Doran and J. Lyttleton (eds.), *Lordship in Medieval Ireland: Image and Reality* (Dublin, 2008), pp. 75-98; Given-Wilson, *English Nobility*, p. 44.

<sup>36</sup> Marc Morris, *The Bigod Earls of Norfolk in the Thirteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 138-83; Waugh, *Lordship of England*, pp. 249-53; Phillips, *Edward II*, pp. 269-70, 295-7; Frame, *Colonial Ireland*, p. 80; J. R. S. Phillips, *Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, 1307-24: A Study in Politics* (Oxford, 1972); A. J. Otway-Ruthven, ‘The partition of the de Verdon lands in Ireland in 1332’, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* [hereafter *PRIA*], 66 (1968), C, 401-55.

<sup>37</sup> Frame, *English Lordship in Ireland*, pp. 53-74; Robin Frame, ‘Lordship beyond the Pale: Munster in the later Middle Ages’, in Roger Stalley (ed.), *Limerick and South-West Ireland: Medieval Art and Architecture*. British Archaeological Association Transactions, 34 (Leeds, 2011), pp. 5-18; Brendan Smith, *Crisis and Survival in Late Medieval Ireland: The English in Louth and Their Neighbours, 1330-1450* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 25-37.

for his own family. The murder of William de Burgh, earl of Ulster, in 1333 left the Irish and English estates of the family in the hands of his infant daughter, Elizabeth, and in 1342 the king arranged for Elizabeth to marry his son, Lionel of Antwerp. At a moment when the English settlement in Ireland was under great pressure, and when relations between colonial leaders and royal government were at breaking point, the king signalled his belief in the importance of transnational landholding as a crucial bond between England and Ireland by giving his family a landed endowment across the Irish Sea that was unprecedented in size and importance.<sup>38</sup> The same belief prompted him to intervene in the Anglo-Irish marriage market again sixteen years later, this time to arrange the marriage of Isobel, the daughter of Lionel and Elizabeth, to Edmund, son of Roger Mortimer, earl of March.

Edward III ensured the continuation of transmarine landholding but changed its character. The number of lordships that straddled the Irish Sea was reduced, and those that survived now belonged to a handful of the greatest lords. In the first decades of the fourteenth century it had been possible for chief governors such as John Wogan, lord of Picton in Pembrokeshire (d. 1321), and John Darcy of Knaith in Lincolnshire (d. 1347) to acquire and successfully exploit estates in Ireland, and establish branches of their families there.<sup>39</sup> A generation later Thomas Rokeby and William Windsor, chief governors for several periods between the mid-1350s and mid-1370s, were unable to make a profit from the Irish lands they purchased while in office, and within a short space of time divested themselves of them.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Frame, 'Historians, aristocrats and Plantagenet Ireland', p. 142.

<sup>39</sup> Hartland, 'Absenteeism', p. 223; Frame, *English Lordship in Ireland*, pp. 96-8; Frame, 'Historians, aristocrats and Plantagenet Ireland', pp. 144-5; Smith, *Crisis and Survival in Late Medieval Ireland*, pp. 34, 80-1.

<sup>40</sup> Robin Frame, 'Thomas Rokeby, sheriff of Yorkshire, justiciar of Ireland', *Peritia*, 10 (1996), 274-96; Brendan Smith, 'Late medieval Ireland and the English connection: Waterford and Bristol, ca. 1360-1446', *JBS*, 50 (2011), 546-65, esp. 554-5.

Reference to the undoubted decline in the Irish (and English) economy as the century progressed will not on its own serve to explain why English lords of relatively modest means were finding it increasingly difficult to benefit from acquiring Irish property. At least as important was the simultaneous growth of antipathy on the part of colonial leaders towards lords resident in England who took profits from their Irish lands without striving to defend them. Crucially, Edward III agreed with this critique, and upon deciding in 1360 to send Lionel of Antwerp to Ireland as lieutenant, insisted that he be accompanied by English lords with estates in the Lordship.<sup>41</sup>

Pressure on non-resident English lords to dispose of their Irish properties in the decades that followed caused many of them to sell up. The smaller number of larger and – in theory at least – more durable transmarine estates that resulted were held by both English and colonial lords. Between the 1360s and the end of the century, for instance, the Butler earls of Ormond, who already held properties in several English counties, purchased large portions of what had once been the Clare lordship in Ireland, including Kilkenny castle, which thereafter became the seat of Ormond power.<sup>42</sup> The position of Edmund Mortimer, earl of March, when he landed at Howth, north of Dublin, in May 1380 as a landowner on both sides of the Irish Sea was therefore not unique. But in terms of the extent and wealth of his lands he was by far the greatest of the small number of lords who continued to hold in both England and Ireland.

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The commitment of the Mortimers to their Irish lands cannot be doubted. Roger, (d. 1360) was the only Mortimer lord not to spend time in Ireland between 1308 and 1425, while the third, fourth, and fifth earls of March all died there, in 1381, 1398, and 1425 respectively.

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<sup>41</sup> Hartland, 'Absenteeism', pp. 215-29.

<sup>42</sup> Frame, *English Lordship in Ireland*, pp. 52-74; Frame, *Political Development of the British Isles*, p. 183.

(Richard Marshal, earl of Pembroke, who was killed in combat on the Curragh in 1234, was the only other English earl to die in the Irish Lordship.<sup>43</sup>) Edmund, the third earl (d. 1381), who died at the age of twenty-nine spent the final eighteen months of the eight years of his majority in the country, while his son, Roger (d. 1398), who was twenty-four when he died, spent almost a quarter of his short life there.<sup>44</sup> The Mortimer lords came to Ireland with their wives, children and other relatives. Joan de Geneville accompanied Roger Mortimer to Trim, which would from that point be the Mortimer caput in Ireland, in 1308, and at the time of his death in county Carlow in July 1398, the widow of Roger, the fourth earl of March, Eleanor Holland, and his seven year-old son and heir, Edmund, were also at Trim. It was at Trim that Edmund was to die twenty-seven years later.<sup>45</sup> Edmund, the third earl (d. 1381), introduced his illegitimate half-brother, Sir Thomas Mortimer, to the Lordship. He was present when Edmund died unexpectedly at Cork in December 1381, and ran the country in the name of his seven year old nephew, Roger Mortimer, until 1383. Back in England, Thomas headed the council that kept the Mortimer inheritance in good condition during Roger's minority, and he was in Ireland when the fourth earl arrived in 1394 with Richard II.<sup>46</sup> Earlier in the century, Roger Mortimer (d. 1330) had involved several members of his family in Ireland and in 1321 attempted to establish a cadet line of the family in the Lordship by arranging for the marriage of his second son, Roger (d. 1328), to Joan, daughter of Edmund Butler, with the intention of

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<sup>43</sup> See the references to the individual earls in *ODNB*; Peter Crooks, "'Divide and rule': factionalism as royal policy in the lordship of Ireland, 1171-1265', *Peritia*, 19 (2005), 263-307, esp. 292-7.

<sup>44</sup> Brendan Smith, 'Dressing the part in the Plantagenet empire: the death of Roger Mortimer, earl of March and Ulster, in 1398', in Crooks *et al* (eds.), *Plantagenet Empire*, pp. 232-47.

<sup>45</sup> Smith, *Crisis and Survival in Late Medieval Ireland*, pp. 73-4, 86-7.

<sup>46</sup> Davies, 'Mortimer, Roger (VII), fourth earl of March'; Davies, *Lords and Lordship*, 38, 185; James Lydon, *The Lordship of Ireland in the Middle Ages* (new edn, Dublin, 2003), p. 165.



settling his Irish lands on the couple. The marriage was childless, and the attempt to found an Irish branch of the family foundered later in 1328 when another son, John, upon whom Roger had bestowed his Irish property, died in a tournament.<sup>47</sup>

Both the crown and the leaders of the colony believed that Ireland was best governed by an English lord with a substantial landed interest in the country. Roger Mortimer (d. 1330) arrived at Youghal in April 1317 bearing the title lieutenant of Ireland, and each subsequent Mortimer lord who came to the island did so not simply as the greatest landowner in the Lordship, but as the representative of the king. What was good for the Mortimer position in Ireland, it was accepted, was good for the English Lordship as a whole. Thus, Roger Mortimer's first campaign as lieutenant in 1317 was not against the Scots but against those of his own tenants in the liberty of Trim, the de Lacys, who were accused of collaborating with Edward Bruce.<sup>48</sup> In advance of taking up the lieutenancy Edmund Mortimer (d. 1381) had an inventory compiled of all his lands, including those in Ireland, and very soon after landing at Howth in May 1380 made for Trim castle, from where he conducted campaigns to regain Mortimer dominance in Meath and Ulster.<sup>49</sup> It was while playing host to the most important

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<sup>47</sup> Mortimer, *Greatest Traitor*, pp. 320-1; Robin Frame, 'Edmund Butler, earl of Carrick (d. 1321)', *ODNB*; Paul Dryburgh, 'The last refuge of a scoundrel? Edward II and Ireland, 1321-7', in Gwilym Dodd and Anthony Musson (eds.), *The Reign of Edward II: New Perspectives* (Woodbridge, 2006), pp. 119-39, at p. 126.

<sup>48</sup> Frame, *Ireland and Britain*, pp. 93-4; Dryburgh, 'Roger Mortimer', pp. 91-4.

<sup>49</sup> Smith, *Crisis and Survival in Late Medieval Ireland*, pp. 70-1. The inventory is at B[ritish] L[ibrary] Additional MS 6041 and BL Harley 1240. For the Irish sections see: Herbert Wood, 'The muniments of Edmund de Mortimer, third earl of March, concerning his liberty of Trim', *PRIA*, 40 (1932) C, 312-55; Robin Frame, 'A register of lost deeds relating to the earldom of Ulster, c.1230-1376', in Seán Duffy (ed.), *Princes, Prelates and Poets in Medieval Ireland: Essays in Honour of Katharine Simms* (Dublin, 2013), pp. 85-106; Edmund Curtis,

Irish lords of Ulster who had just submitted to him that the fifth earl died of plague at Trim in January 1425.<sup>50</sup> When Richard II appointed Roger Mortimer (d. 1398) as his Irish lieutenant in 1395, he gave him particular responsibility for the Mortimer lands of Meath, Ulster and Connacht, while assigning to William Scrope, with the subordinate title of justiciar, care of Leinster, Louth and Munster. A letter from Roger to Richard from April 1396 summed up the coincidence of interests nicely: ‘I do not think to pursue anything which will be against our lord the king nor his profit, but, as I think if the thing be well examined, which will be as much or more for his profit as for mine ...’<sup>51</sup>

The Mortimers hoped to profit from their service to the crown in Ireland. The chief governorship was normally supported by an annual stipend of £500, paid from the receipts of the Irish exchequer, but Mortimer lieutenants were promised much better remuneration. Roger Mortimer received a fee of £4,000 from the king’s wardrobe on his appointment as lieutenant in October 1316.<sup>52</sup> Before accepting appointment as lieutenant for three years in October 1379, Edmund Mortimer entered into an indenture with the king whereby he was to be paid over £13,000, which did not include £1,000 for his passage to Ireland. He was not

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‘Feudal charters of the de Burgo lordship of Connacht, 1237-1325’, in John Ryan (ed.), *Féilsgríbhinn Eóin Mhic Néill: essays and studies presented to Professor Eoin MacNeill* (Dublin, 1940), pp. 286-95.

<sup>50</sup> Katharine Simms, ‘The archbishops of Armagh and the O’Neills 1347-1471’, *IHS*, 19 (1974), 38-55.

<sup>51</sup> Dorothy Johnston, ‘The interim years: Richard II and Ireland, 1395-1399’, in James Lydon (ed.), *England and Ireland in the Later Middle Ages: Essays in Honour of Jocelyn Otway-Ruthven* (Dublin, 1981), pp. 175-95, quotation at p. 181, citing M. Dominica Legge (ed.), *Anglo-Norman Letters and Petitions from All Souls MS 182* (Oxford, 1941), no. 15.

<sup>52</sup> H. G. Richardson and G. O. Sayles, *The Administration of Ireland 1172-1377* (Dublin, 1963), pp. 13-14; Philomena Connolly, *Irish Exchequer Payments 1270-1446* (Dublin, 1998), pp. ix-xxv; Dryburgh, ‘Roger Mortimer’, p. 90.

required to account for these sums, nor for the revenues, including taxes, which he raised in the Lordship. When his son, Roger Mortimer, was appointed lieutenant for three years in April 1397 he was promised over £3,000 per annum, again with freedom from account, while the same sum was awarded to Edmund Mortimer from the English exchequer upon his appointment to the post by the minority council of Henry VI in May 1423.<sup>53</sup> The chief governorship of Ireland, however, was not an office likely to enrich its holder in this period, and so it proved for the Mortimers.<sup>54</sup> In September 1379, two months after entering into the indenture with Edmund Mortimer, the king ordered that pieces of his jewellery be delivered to the soon-to-be appointed lieutenant as surety for a loan of £1,000 that Edmund had made to him to help pay for soldiers to be sent to Ireland.<sup>55</sup> Less than a year after his arrival in the Lordship it was Mortimer's turn to sell some of his own jewels in order to sustain his retinue, since his promised stipend had not been paid. He was still owed over £3,000 at the time of his death in December 1381.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Dorothy Johnston, 'Chief governors and treasurers of Ireland in the reign of Richard II', in Terry Barry, Robin Frame and Katharine Simms (eds.), *Colony and Frontier in Medieval Ireland: Essays Presented to J. F. Lydon* (London, 1995), pp. 97-115; Elizabeth Matthew, 'The financing of the lordship of Ireland under Henry V and Henry VI', in Anthony Pollard (ed.), *Property and Politics: Essays in Later Medieval English History* (Gloucester, 1984), 97-115.

<sup>54</sup> Johnston, 'Chief governors'; Philomena Connolly, 'The financing of English expeditions to Ireland, 1361-1376', in Lydon (ed.), *England and Ireland in the Later Middle Ages*, pp. 104-22.

<sup>55</sup> *Handbook and Select Calendar of Sources for Medieval Ireland in the National Archives of the United Kingdom*, ed. Paul Dryburgh and Brendan Smith (Dublin, 2005), p. 160 [TNA E 28/1/25].

<sup>56</sup> Johnston, 'Chief governors', 100-3; A. J. Otway-Ruthven, 'The chief governors of medieval Ireland', in Peter Crooks (ed.), *Government, War and Society in Medieval Ireland: Essays by Edmund Curtis, A. J. Otway-Ruthven and James Lydon* (Dublin, 2008), pp. 79-89.

A great lord acting on behalf of the king was expected to draw upon his own resources as well as receiving financial support from the crown. Irish revenues alone were unlikely to help the Mortimers significantly in this regard. The most valuable element of their Irish estate was the liberty of Trim or Meath, which in the 1320s – when it was in the hands of the crown – yielded an annual sum to the Dublin exchequer of £500, thus making it one of the most important contributors to the finances of the Lordship.<sup>57</sup> It remained profitable later in the century, though subject to Irish raids, but could not on its own fund Mortimer ambitions elsewhere in Ireland.<sup>58</sup> Trim abutted Ulster, which had been prosperous under its Burgh earls, but which experienced economic decline in the aftermath of the murder of Earl William in 1333.<sup>59</sup> The money required to protect Trim, secure what remained of Ulster, and potentially revive Connacht, where flickers of English influence survived into the early fifteenth century, would have to come from the Mortimer lands east of the Irish Sea.<sup>60</sup> In his will, Edmund Mortimer (d. 1381) expressed his pride ‘in the arms of Mortimer and Ulster’, and his son, Roger, emphasised the geographical breadth of his lordship by styling himself ‘earl of March and Ulster, lord of Wigmore, Clare, Trim and Connacht’ in an indenture he entered into with the earl of Ormond in 1397.<sup>61</sup> The use of language was significant: the

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<sup>57</sup> Potterton, *Medieval Trim*, pp. 94-5.

<sup>58</sup> Dryburgh and Smith (eds.), *Inquisitions and Extents*, nos. 220-7, 245.

<sup>59</sup> Frame, ‘Register of lost deeds relating to the earldom of Ulster’, p. 88.

<sup>60</sup> Robin Frame, ‘Rediscovering medieval Ireland: Irish chancery rolls and the historian’, *PRIA*, 113 C (2013), 193-217; Frame, *English Lordship in Ireland*, pp. 63-4; Brendan Smith, ‘Before reform and revival: English government in late medieval Ireland’, in Christopher Maginn and Gerald Power (eds.), *Frontiers, States and Identity in Early Modern Ireland and Beyond* (Dublin, 2016), pp. 21-35.

<sup>61</sup> *A Collection of the Wills ... of the Kings and Queens of England ...*, ed. J. Nichols (London, 1780), 104-17; ‘Private indentures for life service in peace and war, 1278-1476’, ed. Michael Jones and Simon Walker, *Camden*

Mortimers viewed their possessions as a single entity (as the contents of the inventory compiled for Edmund, early of March, in the late 1370s made clear) and used resources from one constituent part to aid in the maintenance of another.<sup>62</sup>

They did not, however, expend these resources on lost causes, as is suggested by their attitude to their earliest Irish acquisition. In the winter of 1280-1 Roger Mortimer, lord of Wigmore, held captive in his castle of Dunamase, Muirchertach Mac Murrough [Mac Murchadha], king of the Irish of Leinster, and leader of the confederation of Irish lords that had troubled his lands there for many years.<sup>63</sup> In June 1284 Roger's widow, Matilda, granted the Laois lands to their son, Edmund, and a copy of this charter was among the muniments of Roger Mortimer confiscated and stored in the Tower of London following his unsuccessful rebellion in 1322.<sup>64</sup> By that date Roger had already recognised that Dunamase and the adjoining borough of Newtown Leys, which in 1282 had included 127 burgages, were all but lost.<sup>65</sup> In his capacity as chief governor of the Lordship in 1318 he had appointed Laoighseach O'More, head of the Irish family which had been attacking his lands for a generation, as guardian of his lordship of Dunamase. For the rest of his career, which ended with his murder in 1342, Laoighseach alternated between allying with the colonial government in return for payment, and burning English settlements in the midlands, using the

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*Miscellany*, 32 (1994), 121. See also Arlene Hogan, *The Priory of Llanthony Prima and Secunda in Ireland, 1172-1541: Lands, Patronage and Politics* (Dublin, 2008), p. 347, for Edmund Mortimer's style of address in 1380.

<sup>62</sup> Davies, *Lords and Lordship*, p. 35; Davies, *Lordship and Society*, p. 61; Holmes, *Estates of the Higher Nobility*, p. 101; Frame, *Ireland and Britain*, p. 239; see above,

<sup>63</sup> Duffy, 'Irish and Welsh responses to the Plantagenet empire in the reign of Edward I', p. 156.

<sup>64</sup> BL Egerton Rolls 8723, m.3d

<sup>65</sup> Orpen (ed. Duffy), *Ireland under the Normans*, pp. 331-2; A. J. Otway-Ruthven, 'The medieval county of Kildare', *IHS*, 11, 43 (1959), 184.

castle at Dunamase as his base.<sup>66</sup> The inventory of Mortimer possessions compiled in the late 1370s included the Dunamase charter of 1284, but neither Edmund (d. 1380), nor Roger (d. 1398) campaigned to regain the castle during their sojourns in Ireland.<sup>67</sup> It was not listed among the possessions to be reconquered from the Irish in Iolo Goch's poem to Roger Mortimer in 1394, and it was not included among those areas placed under Roger's jurisdiction by Richard II in 1395.<sup>68</sup> Realism combined with ambition were the hallmarks of Mortimer lordship on both sides of the Irish Sea.

The resources that the Mortimers directed towards Ireland included men as well as money, and they did not have to look far for trustworthy dependants who would further their interests there.<sup>69</sup> One such servant was Hugh Turpilton who originated in a village adjacent to Wigmore. He was granted the manor of Tubber, which had been forfeited by a Mortimer tenant in 1317 on account of his support for Robert Bruce, and in the following year participated in the battle of Faughart in which Edward Bruce was killed. He acted as Mortimer's Irish attorney when Roger returned to England in 1318, and rose to be steward of his household as Mortimer's star ascended. In November 1330 he was killed while trying to

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<sup>66</sup> Brendan Smith, 'Lordship in the British Isles, c.1320-c.1360: the ebb-tide of the English empire?', in Huw Pryce and John Watts (eds.), *Power and Identity in the Middle Ages: Essays in Memory of Rees Davies* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 153-63, at pp. 153-4.

<sup>67</sup> BL Additional MS 6041, f. liii (b), no. xx; BL Harley MS 1240, f. xxxiii (b), no. xx. Published in Wood, 'The muniments of Edmund Mortimer', 335-6.

<sup>68</sup> E. I. Rowlands, 'Iolo Goch', in James Carney and David Greene (eds.), *Celtic Studies: Essays in Memory of Angus Matheson 1912-1962* (London, 1968), pp. 124-46.

<sup>69</sup> Paul Dryburgh, 'The career of Roger Mortimer, first earl of March (c.1287-1330)', (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Bristol, 2002), pp. 153-205.

prevent the earl of March being taken by supporters of Edward III in Nottingham castle.<sup>70</sup>

Edmund Hakeluyt, another Herefordshire native, joined Roger Mortimer's mission to Ireland in 1317 and was appointed by him to the post of Irish escheator in 1318.<sup>71</sup> The family connection with Ireland proved long-lasting. Edward's son, also Edward, was appointed by Roger Mortimer, second earl of March (d. 1360), to act as his seneschal of Trim in 1354, while his son, Leonard Hakeluyt (d. 1413) accompanied the third earl to the Lordship in 1380 and remained there after his death, acting as seneschal of Trim and justice of the peace in Meath. Leonard had returned to England by 1385, when he was first elected to parliament, but came back to Ireland with Roger Mortimer in 1394. This appears to have been his last sojourn in the Lordship, and by 1397 he had returned to England, where he acted as Roger's attorney.<sup>72</sup>

Another of those from the west midlands of England introduced to Ireland by Edmund Mortimer was John Bromwich. He had served Lionel of Antwerp, duke of Clarence, before entering Mortimer employment in advance of his expedition to Brittany in 1373. He was retained by a life indenture by the third earl of March in 1379 and served as justiciar of

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<sup>70</sup> CIRCLE: a calendar of Irish chancery letters (<https://chancery.tcd.ie/>) [Hereafter CIRCLE]. Patent roll 11 Edward II, nos. 151-155. Dryburgh and Smith (eds.), *Inquisitions and Extents*, nos. 220-7; Connolly, *Irish Exchequer Payments*, p. 251; Dryburgh, 'Roger Mortimer', pp. 89-102; Dryburgh, 'Career of Roger Mortimer', p. 175.

<sup>71</sup> Ralph A. Griffiths, *The Principality of Wales in the Later Middle Ages: The Structure and Personnel of Government I. South Wales 1277-1536* (Cardiff, 1972), pp. 243-4.

<sup>72</sup> Frame, *English Lordship in Ireland*, pp. 70-1. Davies, *Lords and Lordship*, p. 123; Holmes, *Estates of the Higher Nobility*, p. 63; CIRCLE: Patent Roll 5 Richard II, nos. 100, 235, Close Roll 6 Richard II, no. 16; TNA E 101/246/3; The History of Parliament online (<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/hakluyt-leonard-1352-1413>).

Ireland from September of that year until the arrival of his lord in Ireland as lieutenant in May 1380. He appears to have remained in the Lordship at least until the time of Edmund's death in December 1381, acting during that time in a judicial capacity in Mortimer's liberty of Trim.<sup>73</sup> Service in the household of Lionel of Antwerp as a royal clerk also occasioned the first appearance of Walter Brugge in Ireland in the 1360s. He also followed Lionel's daughter, Philippa, into the circle of the Mortimers, and was collecting Mortimer rents in Ulster in the 1370s. He acted as receiver-general of the family estates during the long minority between the death of the third earl of March in 1381 and the coming-of-age of the fourth earl in 1393. He also served as second baron of the Irish exchequer in 1382, and was with Roger Mortimer in Ireland until at least 1396.<sup>74</sup> To take a final example of the use by the Mortimers of their advisers from England and Wales in Ireland, one of Brugge's successors as receiver-general of the Mortimer lordship, Thomas Walwayn was appointed as his treasurer of war in Ireland by Roger Mortimer (d. 1398) in 1394.<sup>75</sup>

The Mortimers also made use of the administrative experience to be found among their leading tenants in Ireland. The Cusack family had been established at Killeen in Hugh de Lacy's lordship of Meath before 1185 and in the early fourteenth century its leading figure was Walter Cusack. He was among those from the Irish Lordship summoned to serve in

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<sup>73</sup> Holmes, *Estates of the Higher Nobility*, pp. 60-1; T. W. Moody, F. X. Martin and F. J. Byrne (eds.), *A New History of Ireland IX: Maps, Genealogies, Lists* (Oxford, 1989), p. 474; Smith, *Crisis and Survival in Late Medieval Ireland*, p. 13.

<sup>74</sup> *The Register of Milo Sweteman, Archbishop of Armagh 1361-1380*, ed. Brendan Smith (Dublin, 1996), pp. 24, 29; *Calendar of Patent Rolls* [hereafter *CPR*] 1377-81, p. 589; *CPR* 1389-92, pp. 404-5; *CPR* 1396-8, p. 8; TNA E 101/246/3; Davies, *Revolt of Owain Glyn Dŵr*, pp. 42-3; Smith, *Crisis and Survival in Late Medieval Ireland*, pp. 70-3.

<sup>75</sup> Holmes, *Estates of the Higher Nobility*, p. 63; Davies, *Revolt of Owain Glyn Dŵr*, p. 9.



Scotland in 1303, 1310 and 1322, and was appointed as an itinerant justice by the crown in 1308.<sup>76</sup> In 1317 he was permitted to hear royal pleas in counties Louth and Meath in place of the lieutenant, Roger Mortimer. By then he was also serving as Roger's seneschal in the liberty of Trim, and in 1323, following Roger's forfeiture, was suspected of keeping his master's war-horses in Ireland in a state of readiness should he return.<sup>77</sup> John Cusack was seneschal of Trim in 1348-50, Walter Cusack served in the same capacity in 1375-6 and 1378, while Thomas Cusack held the post in 1420.<sup>78</sup> In 1397, after a successful military campaign against the Irish of Leinster, Roger Mortimer knighted seven of those who had fought alongside him. They were all major tenants in his liberties of Trim or Ulster, and were heads of families with a history of service both as seneschals of these liberties and as officials of the crown.<sup>79</sup> The opportunities for settlers of this rank to gain glory in the French wars in the fourteenth century were limited: knighting such men for their efforts against the king's enemies in Ireland ensured their continued support for the crown and the Mortimers.

Ireland was also an arena in which the Mortimers could express those claims to authority which derived not from the indulgence of the English crown, but from their Welsh

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<sup>76</sup> Veach, *Lordship in Four Realms*, pp. 26-30; CIRCLE: Patent Roll 31 Edward I, no. 22, Close Roll 3 Edward II, no. 45; *CCR 1318-23*, pp. 529-30.

<sup>77</sup> *CPR 1307-13*, p. 78; CIRCLE: Patent Roll 11 Edward II, no. 144; Potterton, *Medieval Trim*, 371; J. R. S. Phillips, 'The mission of John de Hothum to Ireland, 1315-1316', in Lydon (ed.), *England and Ireland in the Later Middle Ages*, pp. 62-85, at p.71; Frame, *English Lordship in Ireland*, 167-8.

<sup>78</sup> Potterton, *Medieval Trim*, 371-2.

<sup>79</sup> 'Henry Malreburroughs' Chronicle of Ireland', in Meredith Hanmer, Edmund Campion and Edmund Spencer, *The Historie of Ireland* (Dublin, 1633), p. 214; Potterton, *Medieval Trim*, 371-2; *Calendar of Fine Rolls, 1369-77*, pp. 245-6; *Dowdall Deeds*, ed. Charles MacNeill and A. J. Otway-Ruthven (Dublin, 1960), p. 103; CIRCLE: Patent Roll 4 Henry IV, no. 95.

pedigree. The mother of Roger Mortimer (d. 1282), the first lord of Wigmore to acquire Irish lands, was Gwladus Ddu (d. 1251), daughter of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth (d. 1240), prince of Gwynned. The chroniclers patronised by the third and fourth earls of March in the late fourteenth century identified this Welsh marriage as the key moment in the rise of the family. They stressed that as a result of this union their lords were descended from the ancient kings of Britain, and portrayed their actions in terms that drew upon the *Brut* legend.<sup>80</sup> In recounting the death of the fourth earl of March at the hands of the Irish in 1398, Adam Usk included a genealogy that traced his lord's ancestry through the male line as far as the first earl of March (d. 1330), and thereafter through the line of Gwladus, all the way back to Adam via 'Brute, the first king of the Britons'.<sup>81</sup> Nor were these Mortimer propagandists unaware that the 'matter of Britain' had a crucial Irish element. Arthur's fabled exploits had included the conquest of Ireland, and while Gerald of Wales could be disdainful of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*, this Irish episode in his tale was one which he repeated – with some original twists – in justifying Henry II's lawful right to the island.<sup>82</sup> The poem that Roger Mortimer (d. 1398) commissioned from the leading Welsh praise poet of his

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<sup>80</sup> Chris Given-Wilson, 'Chronicles of the Mortimer family, c. 1250-1450', in Richard Eales and Shaun Tyas (eds.), *Family and Dynasty in Late Medieval England* (Donnington, 2003), pp. 67-86; M. E. Giffin, 'Arthur, and Brutus in the Wigmore Manuscript', *Speculum* 16 (1941), 109-20, at 111-13; R. R. Davies, 'The peoples of Britain and Ireland, 1100-1400: IV language and historical mythology', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, sixth series, vol. 7 (1997), 1-24. Davies, *Revolt of Owain Glyn Dŵr*, pp. 176-89.

<sup>81</sup> *The Chronicle of Adam Usk 1377-1421*, ed. and trans. Chris Given-Wilson (Oxford, 1997), pp. 41-9.

<sup>82</sup> R. R. Davies, *The Matter of Britain and the Matter of England* (Oxford, 1996); Davies, *First English Empire*, pp. 38-52; Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, ed. Lewis Thorpe (London, 1966), pp. 219-22; *Expugnatio Hibernica: The Conquest of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis*, ed. and trans. A. B. Scott and F. X. Martin (Dublin, 1978), p. 149.

day, Iolo Goch, before he set out for Ireland in 1394 reminded this ‘second Galahad’ that ‘the grace of Arthur and his cross’ supported him in his endeavours across the Irish Sea.<sup>83</sup> The Mortimer association with Arthur was by this time of long-standing: the Round Table hosted by Roger Mortimer (d. 1282) at Kenilworth in September 1279 was the first event of its kind to be convened by an English baron below the rank of earl, while his grandson Roger, first earl of March (d. 1330) held Round Tables at Bedford and Wigmore after his overthrow of King Edward II.<sup>84</sup> Richard II may well have conceived of his monarchy in ‘British’ terms, but he was aware that he had no monopoly on the *Brut* myth. His increasing uneasiness about the ambitions of the earl of March in Ireland after 1396 may well have been rooted in more than paranoia.<sup>85</sup>

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It was neither their ancestry nor their individual abilities that made the Mortimers great transnational lords, but rather the will of the crown. The sudden rupture in cross-border landholding between England and Scotland at the end of the thirteenth century has perhaps distracted attention from the extent to which the English crown remained committed to transnational landholding thereafter. Edward III made repeated efforts to revive Anglo-

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<sup>83</sup> Dafydd Johnston, *Iolo Goch: Poems* (Llandysul, 1993), pp. 82-9. I am grateful to Prof. Johnston for his advice on this matter.

<sup>84</sup> David Crouch, *Tournament* (Hambledon and London, 2005), pp. 111-31; Haines, *King Edward II*, p. 200

<sup>85</sup> Nigel Saul, *Richard II* (New Haven and London, 1997), pp. 287-92, 396-7; Alistair Dunn, *The Politics of Magnate Power: England and Wales 1389-1413* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 36-7; Michael J. Bennett, ‘Richard II and the wider realm’, in Anthony Goodman and James L. Gillespie (eds.), *Richard II: The Art of Kingship* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 187-204; Andrea Ruddick, *English Identity and Political Culture in the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2013), pp. 167-82; J.-P. Genet, ‘Empire and English identity: reflections on the king of England’s *dominium*’, in Crooks *et al* (eds.), *Plantagenet Empire*, pp. 35-48, at pp. 39-40.

Scottish landholding at intervals between the 1330s and 1360s, and in the Anglo-Irish context the crown nurtured the transmarine landholding links not only of the Mortimers, but also of the Butlers of Ormond and the Talbots of Goodrich.<sup>86</sup> Richard II sought to generate more landholding ties across the Irish Sea. His attempt to delegate control of Ireland to Robert de Vere, earl of Oxford, in 1386 failed, but before they set out for the Lordship together in 1394 he bestowed upon his cousin Edward, earl of Rutland, the title earl of Cork. In 1399 it was rumoured that he intended to make his nephew, Thomas Holland, duke of Surrey, king of Ireland. Surrey was Roger Mortimer's brother-in-law, and might well have come into possession of the Mortimer lands had they been declared forfeit to the crown.<sup>87</sup> In Gascony the number of English landlords remained small, although the grant to John Holland (d. 1400), earl of Huntingdon and duke of Exeter, of the lordship of Marenzin in 1380 demonstrated the willingness of the crown to countenance the generation of new landed ties there.<sup>88</sup> Some cross-Channel landholding ties were broken as lords who adhered to the king

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<sup>86</sup> Brown, *The Wars of Scotland, 1214-1371* (Edinburgh, 2004), pp. 232-43; Michael Brown, *Disunited Kingdoms: Peoples and Politics in the British Isles, 1280-1460* (Harlow, 2013), pp. 150-1, 223; Frame, *English Lordship in Ireland*, pp. 52-74; Frame, *Political Development of the British Isles*, p. 183; Robin Frame, 'Butler, James, first earl of Ormond (c.1305-1338)', *ODNB*; C. A. Empey, 'Butler, James, third earl of Ormond (c.1360-1405)', *ODNB*; Peter Crooks, 'The "calculus of faction" and Richard II's duchy of Ireland, c. 1382-9', in Nigel Saul (ed.), *Fourteenth Century England V* (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 94-115, at pp. 104-7; Scott L. Waugh, 'Talbot, Richard, second Lord Talbot (c.1306-1356)', *ODNB*; Smith, 'Late medieval Ireland and the English connection', 556-7; Dryburgh and Smith (eds.), *Inquisitions and Extents of Medieval Ireland*, no. 345, p. 205.

<sup>87</sup> Brendan Smith, 'The British Isles in the late middle ages: shaping the regions', in Smith (ed.), *Ireland and the English World*, pp. 7-19.

<sup>88</sup> Andrea C. Ruddick, 'Gascony and the limits of British Isles history', in Smith (ed.), *Ireland and the English World*, pp. 68-88; David Green, 'Lordship and principality: colonial policy in Ireland and Aquitaine in the 1360s',

of France after 1337 forfeited their English – and in some cases Irish – lands, but Edward III also attempted to encourage Englishmen to become landowners in France as part of his campaign of conquest there. In the June parliament of 1369, for instance, he announced via the chancellor

that all his lords and other people, of whatever estate, degree, condition or nation they may be, maintaining his side in the quarrel against his enemies of France, shall have and hold in right of inheritance whatever they shall recover and conquer from his said enemies, be they duchies, counties, bailiwicks, cities, towns, castles, fortresses or lordships, situated within the said realm of France, by whatever name or title they are known, to hold to them, their heirs and successors, of the king and his heirs, the kings of France, by the services due and accustomed from them.<sup>89</sup>

While this offer elicited little response from its target audience, the king did award Breton and Norman lands to war captains such as Robert Knolleys and John Chandos, who already held estates in England.<sup>90</sup>

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*JBS*, 47 (2008), 3-39; M. M. N. Stansfield, 'Holland, John, first earl of Huntingdon and duke of Exeter (c.1352-1400)', *ODNB*.

<sup>89</sup> *The Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, gen. ed. C. Given-Wilson (Woodbridge/London, 2005), 16 vols., v, p. 227 (item 25).

<sup>90</sup> Michael Jones, 'Knolles [Knollys], Sir Robert (d. 1407)', *ODNB*; Richard Barber, 'Chandos, Sir John (d. 1370)', *ODNB*; Michael M. Postan, 'The costs of the Hundred Years' War', *Past and Present* [hereafter *P&P*], 27 (1964), 34-53; Peter Crooks, 'State of the union: perspectives on English imperialism in the late Middle Ages', *P&P*, 212 (2011), 3-42; Michael Prestwich, 'The enterprise of war', in Rosemary Horrox and W. Mark Ormrod (eds.), *A Social History of England 1200-1500* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 74-90; W. Mark Ormrod, 'England, Normandy and the beginnings of the Hundred Years War, 1259-1360', in David Bates and Anne Curry (eds.), *England and Normandy in the Middle Ages* (London, 1994), pp. 197-213; Ormrod, *Edward III*, pp. 411-12.

The ability to endow English lords with lands beyond England's borders remained in the eyes of the crown an important means of wielding and displaying its power. As the reach of English government and law in Ireland contracted in the fourteenth century, and as many tenurial ties across the Irish Sea dissolved, the importance of the Mortimers as guarantors of English authority in the Lordship grew. They acted there as lieutenants of the king, but it was land that gave them real authority in Ireland. The realms of the king of England were held together by many bonds, including bureaucratic structures, trade and commerce, and perhaps even a sense of English identity, but without transnational lordship, as kings of England realised, the Plantagenet empire lacked real substance.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Peter Crooks, 'Before Humpty Dumpty: the first English empire and the brittleness of bureaucracy', in Peter Crooks and Timothy H. Parsons (eds.), *Empires and Bureaucracy in World History: From Late Antiquity to the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 2016), pp. 250-87; Michael Brown, 'The Plantagenet empire and the insular world: retrospect and prospect', in Crooks *et al* (eds.), *Plantagenet Empire*, pp. 384-402.